

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended): A method for the therapeutic or prophylactic treatment of ~~subjects~~ a subject suffering from or ~~being~~ subject to a risk of lactic acid accumulation due to imbalanced colon fermentation, said method comprising administering a ~~slowly fermented complex oligomeric or polymeric carbohydrates~~ polydextrose to ~~said a subject suffering from or~~ subject to a risk of lactic acid accumulation due to imbalanced colon fermentation in an amount which is effective in preventing accumulation of lactic acid by sustaining and controlling ~~[[the]]~~ fermentation throughout the colon of said subject.

2. - 4. (Cancelled).

5. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in reducing the pH throughout the colon without accumulation of lactic acid.

6. (Currently Amended): The method ~~[[of]]~~ according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is additionally effective in reducing ~~[[the]]~~ putrefactive fermentation throughout the colon.

7. (Currently Amended): The method ~~[[of]]~~ according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is additionally effective in increasing the amount of butyrate throughout the colon.

8. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in

increasing [[the]] tolerance [[of ]] to probiotic lactic acid bacteria by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

9. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in facilitating ~~the management of~~ reducing lactose intolerance by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

10. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in ~~facilitating the management of~~ reducing food allergy by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

11. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in ~~facilitating the management of~~ reducing celiac disease by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

12. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is effective in reducing the risk of inflammatory diseases in the colon by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

13. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in an amount which is additionally effective in ~~balancing or~~ normalizing the microbial community throughout the colon by preventing accumulation of lactic acid in the colon.

14. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claim 1 to 3~~, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is administered in combination with at least one ~~nutritionally, nutraceutically and/or pharmacologically acceptable carrier and/or vehicle~~ polyol.

15. (Cancelled):

16. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 14, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose and said polyol are administered in synergistic effective amounts to prevent the accumulation of lactic acid throughout the colon.

17. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~15 or~~ 16, wherein said polyol is selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of lactitol, xylitol, maltitol, sorbitol ~~[[,]]~~ and isomalt.

18. (Original): The method according to claim 17, wherein said polyol is lactitol.

19. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 18~~, wherein said ~~carbohydrate is administered to a~~ subject is selected from the group consisting of human beings, pet animals, farm animals, laboratory animals ~~[[,]]~~ and zoo animals.

20. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 ~~[[19]]~~, wherein said subject is selected from the group consisting of a young mammal at the age of weaning, a young mammal suffering from milk crust, a mammal treated with antibiotics, a mammal having sensitivity to lactose, a mammal suffering from celiac disease, a mammal suffering from food allergy and an aged mammal.

21. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 20~~, wherein said ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is incorporated into a an orally administrable food composition ~~to be administered orally~~.

22. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 21~~, wherein said orally administrable food composition is ~~prepared in the form of an orally administrable preparation~~ selected from the group ~~comprising~~ consisting of a dry, semidry or liquid food product, ~~a tablet, a pill, a chewing gum or tablet,~~ a powder, a spray, a syrup, a sugar substitute, a candy or sweet, a dairy product, a frozen dairy product, a meat product, a health drink, a baby food, a pet food, and an animal feed, ~~and the like~~.

23. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 22, wherein said food composition ~~preparation~~ is a sour food or feed product, ~~preferably a sour milk product~~.

24. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 23, wherein said ~~preparation~~ food composition is a sour milk product.
25. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 22, wherein said ~~preparation~~ food composition is selected from the group consisting of yogurt, baby's milk formula, sour milk, curdled milk, dry milk and crout.
26. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein said polydextrose is hydrogenated polydextrose.
27. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein said polydextrose is purified.
28. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~26 or 27~~ 1, wherein said polydextrose is selected from the group consisting of non-hydrogenated polydextrose, hydrogenated polydextrose~~[[,]]~~ and non-hydrogenated ~~polydextrose~~ or hydrogenated polydextrose ~~[[,]]~~ which has been subject to purification and ~~a mixture~~ mixtures thereof.
29. (Cancelled).
30. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 14, wherein the weight ratio of said polyol to said polydextrose ranges from about 1:10 to 10:1, ~~preferably from 1:5 to about 5:1.~~
31. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 21 ~~or 22~~, wherein the ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose is added to a food product in an amount effective ~~amounts~~ to sustain and control the fermentation throughout the colon of a mammal, and the food containing said polydextrose ~~the same~~ is administered to ~~the~~ a mammal.
32. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 21, wherein the ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose and polyol are added to a food product in synergistic effective amounts to prevent the accumulation of lactic acid throughout the colon of a mammal, and the food containing said polydextrose and polyol ~~the same~~ is administered to ~~the~~ a mammal.

33. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 21, wherein the ~~carbohydrate~~ polydextrose and polyol are added to a food product in synergistic effective amounts to reduce the putrefactive fermentation in the colon of a mammal when ~~the~~ [[the]] food containing said polydextrose and polyol ~~the same~~ is administered to ~~[[the]]~~ a mammal.

34. (New): The method according to claim 30, wherein the ratio of polyol to polydextrose is from 1:5 to about 5:1.